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SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MTS M. COPPOLA
VIENNA FOR IAEA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/24/2019

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SUBJECT: SINGAPORE RESPONSE TO DEMARCHE ON U.S. POSTURE ON
IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM AND NEXT STEPS

REF: STATE 120288

Classified By: E/P Counselor Joel Ehrendreich for reasons 1.4 (b)/(d)

¶1. (C) Singapore's bilateral relations with Iran remain positive, but Singapore has made it known to Iran that while all nations have the inalienable right to peaceful nuclear energy, that right comes with obligations and Iran must work with the international community to restore confidence in its nuclear energy ambitions, CHIN Siew Fei, MFA Deputy Director for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Branch, told Econ/Pol Counselor on November 24. Chin concurred with U.S. concerns outlined in reftel and noted that the revelations about the enrichment facility in Qom caused Singapore to speak out against the NAM Vienna Chapter's statement on the implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) safeguards agreement and provisions of UN Security Council Resolutions pertaining to Iran.

¶2. (C) Chin (protect) emphasized that there is no consensus within the NAM on this issue but there are not enough NAM members willing to speak out publicly against Iran's actions.

Chin said in confidence that in working-level meetings, other NAM members, such as the Philippines, do speak out, but those same members choose to remain quiet at the NAM plenary meetings, leaving Singapore in a difficult position as the lone voice of dissent. E/P Counselor noted that there are broad implications to Iran's nuclear development and Chin agreed, assessing that the issue with Iran is not just a NAM issue. It would be very helpful if the United States could help frame the issue within the context of the NPT rather than the NAM to help move the discussion forward and perhaps encourage more NAM members to publicly speak out against Iran's actions, she suggested.

¶3. (C) Chin mentioned that Singapore is not sending any representatives to the upcoming IAEA Board of Governors (BOG) meeting, but Singapore is very interested to learn what transpires now that Malaysia is the new BOG chair. Singapore looks forward to continued discussions on how to deal with concerns regarding Iran's nuclear program.

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